

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for improving interactive animation over a computer network having a client and a server, comprising:

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- a) forming a queue of server messages at the client;
- b) adding received server messages to the queue;
- c) calculating the minimum deadline of the server messages in the queue;
- d) calculating the time required to play all the currently queued animations; and
- 10 e) if the time required to play all the currently queued animations is greater than the minimum deadline of the server messages in the queue, accelerating the animation.

15 2. A method for improving interactive animation over a computer network between first and second clients, comprising:

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- a) forming a queue of messages from the first client at the second client;
- b) adding messages received from the first client to the queue at the second client;
- c) calculating the minimum deadline of the messages in the queue;
- d) calculating the time required to play all the currently queued animations; and
- 25 e) if the time required to play all the currently queued animations is greater than the minimum deadline of the messages in the queue, accelerating the animation.

30 3. A computer program product for improving interactive animation over a computer network having a client and a server, the computer program product comprising:

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- a) a computer usable medium having computer readable program code means embodied in the medium for forming a queue of messages from the first client at the second client;
- b) the computer usable medium having computer readable program code means embodied in the medium, adding received server messages to the queue;

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- c) the computer usable medium having computer readable program code means embodied in the medium for calculating the minimum deadline of the server messages in the queue;
- d) the computer usable medium having computer readable program code means embodied in the medium for calculating the time required to play all the currently queued animations; and
- e) the computer usable medium having computer readable program code means embodied in the medium for determining if the time required to play all the currently queued animations is greater than the minimum deadline of the server messages in the queue, and if it is, accelerating the animation.

4. A computer program product for improving interactive animation over a computer network between a first client and a second client, the computer program product comprising:

- a) a computer usable medium having computer readable program code means embodied in the medium for forming a queue of server messages at the client;
- b) the computer usable medium having computer readable program code means embodied in the medium, adding received from the first client messages to the queue at the second client;
- c) the computer usable medium having computer readable program code means embodied in the medium for calculating the minimum deadline of the messages in the queue;
- d) the computer usable medium having computer readable program code means embodied in the medium for calculating the time required to play all the currently queued animations; and
- e) the computer usable medium having computer readable program code means embodied in the medium for determining if the time required to play all the currently queued animations is greater than the minimum deadline of the messages in the queue, and if it is, accelerating the animation.